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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

20 February 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-29: YUGOSLAVIA (Revision of Pages 1-6, as agreed upon by Board on 16 January)

THE PROBLEM

To assess the capabilities and intentions of the USSR and its European Satellites with respect to action against Yugoslavia during 1951.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Kremlin aims to eliminate the Tito Government, to replace it by a regime subservient to the USSR, and to integrate Yugoslavia politically, economically, and strategically into the European Satellite structure.

2. We believe that Tito's regime will not be overthrown during 1951 by a Soviet-inspired coup or by internal revolt. Therefore, overt armed invasion by Soviet or Satellite forces will be required if the Soviet objective is to be accomplished during 1951.

DOCUMENT NO. _____
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S **01991**
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE **23 Feb 81** REVIEWER: 006514

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3. In the event of full-scale invasion by Soviet forces, Yugoslav forces would be incapable of resisting for more than about two weeks unless they were withdrawn and concentrated in the mountainous area of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro. Even if so concentrated, they could not continue to resist for more than one month.

4. Recent military build-up in the Satellite countries (stockpiling, re-equipment, gasoline conservation, stepping-up of war industry, etc.) points to a great increase in Satellite capabilities for military action. For example, the total ground forces (including security troops) of Hungary and Bulgaria have increased during the past six months from 181,000 to 258,000. Thus the Satellites now have the capability for a successful attack against Yugoslavia, and

such an attack during 1951 must be considered a serious possibility.

5. Against invasion by the armies of the four neighboring Satellite powers (Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, and Albania), organized Yugoslav resistance could be expected to continue for about three months, but probably no more than four months under the most favorable defensive conditions. In either case, guerrilla-type resistance would continue after collapse of organized resistance.

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6. Substantial Western military assistance, in the form of weapons and equipment which could be readily integrated into Yugoslav units, if provided well in advance of an attack, might enable Yugoslavia successfully to defend itself against a Satellite attack, and to check a Soviet attack for considerably more than a month.

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DISCUSSION

SOVIET OBJECTIVES WITH RESPECT TO YUGOSLAVIA

1. The Kremlin aims to eliminate the Tito Government as soon as practicable, to replace it by a regime subservient to the USSR, and to integrate Yugoslavia politically, economically, and strategically into the European Satellite structure.

CURRENT STRENGTH AND STABILITY OF TITO'S REGIME

2. The Tito regime is stable. Internal security forces are large and efficient, and have dealt successfully with active opposition elements. Efforts of the Cominform to penetrate and undermine the regime by subversive means have thus far failed conspicuously. There is no evidence of effective organized opposition within the country and ^{there are} no serious personal rivals to Tito himself.

3. A majority of the Yugoslav population are non-Communists or even anti-Communists. Living standards are lower now than before the war. The resentments caused by the nationalization of the economy, by the campaign against religion, and by the development of police state techniques is still strong. In the party hierarchy there is some criticism of the mal-admin-

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istration of the import program and of unsatisfactory economic progress. It is always possible that some of Tito's followers, though seemingly loyal, may be awaiting an opportunity to improve their fortune at the expense of their leader. However, most of the Yugoslav people prefer the present regime to the reestablishment of alien control from Moscow. Tito's bold and successful stand in the face of mounting Soviet and Satellite pressure has appealed strongly to Yugoslav national pride. In the event of invasion, the great majority of Yugoslavs would support Tito and carry out what resistance was militarily possible. Even the long-standing national minority tensions in the country are relatively quiescent. The improvement of Yugoslav relations with the Western Powers, and particularly with the US, has met favorable popular response.

4. Tito's freedom of political action is hampered by his paradoxical ideological position. Any considerable retreat from Communist theory or practice and any conspicuous associations with the Western Powers give substance to the Kremlin's contention that Tito is a traitor to Communism and might cost him the allegiance of some of his more zealous Marxist followers who are indispensable functionaries in his totalitarian regime. On the other hand, if he adheres too faithfully to Communist dogma, he may antagonize the Western Powers and non-Communist

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elements within Yugoslavia whose support is essential if national independence is to be maintained.

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